

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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R 100910Z FEB 75
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1255

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 1179

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CG US PC PFOR
SUBJECT: PEACE CORPS: ACT FIVE AND A HALF

REF: KINSHASA'S 916 ET AL

1. BY ONE OF THOSE NOT SO HAPPY COINCIDENCES SALONGO
FEB 7 PUBLISHED STORY, ATTRIBUTED TO DIRECTOR OF TRAINING,
ENTITLED "140 PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS ARRIVING KINSHASA".
FOREIGN MINISTER BULA WANTED EXPLANATION. WHEN I SAW HIM
LATE FEB 7 I GAVE HIM COPY DIRECTOR CROSSON'S MEMORANDUM
TO ME OF SAME DATE, PREPARED AFTER INVESTIGATION, AND
DENYING THAT TRAINING OFFICER HAD SPOKEN RECENTLY TO ANYONE
IN PRESS. FOREIGN MINISTER THEN INFORMED ME CITOYEN
MBUYI "OF YOUR INFORMATION SERVICE" HAD GIVEN STORY TO
AZAP CORRESPONDENT FEB 5. I REPLIED I HONESTLY HAD NO
RECOLLECTION OF WHO MBUYI WAS AND COULD ASSURE HIM THAT
STATEMENT WAS UNAUTHORIZED. (IT TURNS OUT MBUYI IS
CROSSON'S NO. 1 ZAIROIS EMPLOYEE.) I ASKED BULA IF
MBUYI HAD GONE TO AZAP OR HAD AZAP GONE TO HIM. HE
SAID AZAP CORRESPONDENT CALLED ON INFORMATION
OFFICER REGULARLY AND THAT STORY HAD BEEN GENERATED
IN COURSE OF SUCH PERIODIC MEETING.

2. TOWARD END LONG DISCUSSION BULA RETURNED TO SUBJECT
OF PEACE CORPS IN GENERAL, SAYING IT WAS BECAUSE
IMPORTANCE ZAIRE ATTACHED TO GOOD RELATIONS AND
RECOGNITION THAT PCV'S ARE "BELIEVERS" WHOSE PERSONAL
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CONSCIENCES MIGHT NOT BE COMPATIBLE WITH ZAIRIAN VIEWS

THAT ONE COULD REMOVE POTENTIAL CONFLICT BY REMOVING PEACE CORPS. I REPLIED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS WERE "BELIEVERS" IN THEORY THAT BY WORKING FOR AND WITH ZAIRIANS THEY WOULD MAKE PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ZAIRE. IDEA THAT ONE COULD AVOID TROUBLE BY EXPELLING PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS COULD EQUALLY WELL BE APPLIED TO CHINESE AGRICULTURAL TECHNICIANS, ROMANIAN TEACHERS, BELGIAN, AND AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN. I SAID I UNDERSTOOD THAT AS MATTER OF FACT NEAR KIKWIT ZAIROIS, CHINESE AND PCV'S ARE WORKING IN COOPERATIVE AND COMPLEMENTARY FASHION ON AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT. I APPROVED OF THIS AND HOPED HE DID.

3. HE TURNED DISCUSSION BACK TO RELIGIOUS ISSUES. I SAID IF SUCH CONFLICTS OF CONSCIENCE AROSE PCV'S KNEW THAT THEY HAD TO KEEP THEIR VIEWS TO THEMSELVES OR GET OUT. WE LEFT IT THERE.

4. COMMENT: AT NO TIME DURING THIS SOMEWHAT TRICKY DISCUSSION DID BULA REITERATE PEACE CORPS MUST LEAVE NOR DID HE ASK ME WHEN THEY WERE GOING. AT NO TIME DID I SAY THEY WERE STAYING. WHILE SOME AMBIGUITY PERISTS, I JUDGE MOBUTU HAS LET BULA KNOW HE CHANGED HIS MIND. TEST WILL COME IN TERMS OF WHETHER OR NOT WE EVER GET ANOTHER OFFICIAL REQUEST FOR MORE VOLUNTEERS. IN MEANTIME, IT INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT EXPIRING PCV VISAS ARE BEING RENEWED BY FOREIGN MINISTRY.
HINTON

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